

Message Text

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ACTION L-03

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ARA-11 EA-11 EUR-25 NEA-10 RSC-01 ADP-00

IO-12 CAB-09 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00 EB-11 INR-09

NSAE-00 FAA-00 OIC-04 SS-14 NSC-10 RSR-01 /142 W
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R 191800 Z MAR 73

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9818

INFO AMCONSUL MONTREAL

C O N F I D E N T I A L LONDON 03263

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OCON, OTRA, PINS

SUBJECT: CIVAIR - ICAO DIPLOMATIC CONFERENCE/ ASSEMBLY
PREPARATORY CONSULTATIONS

REF: (A) MONTREAL 216; (B) STATE 47318

1. IN FOLLOW- UP TO ICAO LEGAL COMMITTEE MEETING ON
HIJACKING SANCTIONS, WE HAVE HAD SEVERAL DISCUSSIONS
WITH OFFICIALS IN FCO, DTI AND CAA WHO ARE RESPONSIBLE
FOR DETERMINING UKG POSITION ON ICAO ISSUES. THEY ARE
AWARE OF US DISAPPOINTMENT WITH LACK OF COOPERATION AND
SUPPORT FROM UK DELEGATION AT MONTREAL. ALTHOUGH
UNREPENTANT, BECAUSE CLEARLY THEY BELIEVE THEIR TACTICS
WERE JUSTIFIED, THEY NEVERTHELESS BELIEVE MUTUAL
RECRIMINATIONS AT THIS STAGE SERVE NO USEFUL PURPOSE.
THEY EXPLAIN DIFFERING TACTICS THIS WAY: IN SEPTEMBER
MEETING OF LEGAL SUBCOMMITTEE UK AND US HAD IDENTITY OF
VIEWS-- EACH WANTED INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY TO ADOPT
SANCTIONS CONVENTION (A) WITH TEETH AND (B) SOON. IN
JANUARY MEETING IT BECAME APPARENT (A) AND (B) TOGETHER
NOT POSSIBLE. US OPTED TO PULL SOME TEETH TO GET
ACTION REASONABLY SOON (NORDIC PROPOSAL FOR INDEPENDENT
CONVENTION) WHEREAS UK CHOSE TO SACRIFICE TIME ELEMENT
TO RETAIN MORE TEETH (UK- SWISS PROPOSAL TO AMEND CHICAGO
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CONVENTION).

2. UK OFFICIALS RECOGNIZE INFLUENCE OF MAJOR AVIATION COUNTRIES AT LEGAL COMMITTEE MEETING IN JANUARY SERIOUSLY UNDERCUT BY LACK OF DISCIPLINE AND AGREED TACTICS IN FACE OF UNIFIED ARAB/ AFRICAN BLOC. IF POSSIBLE, THEY WANT TO AVOID REPETITION OF THAT PERFORMANCE IN AUGUST CONFERENCE/ ASSEMBLY. BECAUSE THEY STILL BELIEVE US AND UK SHARE COMMON OBJECTIVE, THEY ARE INTERESTED IN CONSULTING WITH US PERHAPS IN APRIL OR MAY TO REVIEW PROS AND CONS OF RESPECTIVE POSITIONS WITH VIEW TO DETERMINE WHETHER IT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE TO WORK OUT A COMMON STRATEGY FOR AUGUST MEETINGS.

3. COMMENT. EVEN THOUGH US/ UK POSITIONS ARE FAR APART, WE BELIEVE CONSULTATIONS WITH THE BRITISH AT AN EARLY DATE WOULD BE USEFUL AND WE WOULD HOPE THAT IT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE FOR US TEAM VISITING COPENHAGEN FOR WORKING LEVEL CONSULTATIONS WITH SCANS TO STOP IN LONDON FOR INFORMAL TALKS. HIJACKING SANCTIONS CONTINUES TO BE A POLITICALLY- CHARGED ISSUE HERE IN UK AND ALTHOUGH UK OFFICIALS HAVE NOT YET SHOWN ANY INCLINATION TO BACK- OFF FROM POSITION TAKEN IN MONTREAL, IF THEY ARE TO DO SO THEY WILL HAVE TO BE PERSUADED AT SUFFICIENTLY EARLY STAGE (A) TO PERMIT THEM TO CONVINCE THEIR OWN PRESSURE GROUPS AND (B) TO GIVE THEMSELVES TIME TO WORK OUT A FACE- SAVING WAY OF ALTERING THEIR POSITION.

4. WE HAVE NOT, OF COURSE, MENTIONED TO BRITISH INTENTION OF US TEAM TO VISIT COPENHAGEN BUT WE ASSUME THEY WILL LEARN OF VISIT BY THE TIME IT TAKES PLACE. IF US TEAM CHOOSES NOT TO STOP IN LONDON, BRITISH MAY FEEL WE ARE TRYING TO ISOLATE THEM, WHICH COULD MAKE IT THAT MUCH MORE DIFFICULT TO GET UK COOPERATION IN AUGUST.

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